UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/24933
9 December 1992
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

LETTER DATED 9 DECEMBER 1992 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF ALGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you the comments made by Algeria, in its capacity as an observer of the peace process and as a country accepting Saharan refugees, further to the letter dated 10 November 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco addressed to you.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council, and have them issued as a Security Council document.

(Signed) Rabah HADID
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative

92-78527 3677h (E) 101292 101292 101292

/...

Annex

Algeria has read with astonishment the letters dated 9 and 10 November 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco addressed to the High Commissioner for Refugees and to the President of the Security Council respectively.

As an observer of the process aimed at settling the question of Western Sahara, and as a country accepting Saharan refugees, Algeria would like to make the following comments:

1. It is with both disappointment and regret that Algeria notes the persistent blocking of the plan to settle the question of Western Sahara.

2. It should not be difficult to identify the source of the delays and disruptions in the referendum process in Western Sahara; it may become useful, indeed even necessary, to do so.

3. At the very moment when efforts are being made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his Special Representative to overcome that situation, it is not a good idea - and it ought not to be permitted - to move the debate on to contentious ground, at the expense of calm, earnest cooperation in establishing the necessary conditions for implementing the United Nations plan for a referendum on the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

4. Nor is it a good idea to ignore the underlying reasons that forced all those Saharans to go into exile and find refuge in Algeria, and to stay there for so many years. In any event, no one is permitted to prejudge what the Saharan people want or to pose as the guardian of their basic rights.

5. As for the situation of Saharan refugees living in Algerian territory, is there any need to recall that the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara is present at Tindouf and is in constant contact with them?

Likewise, the specialized agencies of the United Nations are themselves kept well abreast of the situation within the refugee community.

Lastly, representatives of non-governmental organizations and eminent personalities active on two fronts - delivering humanitarian aid and protecting human rights - have for many years been visiting, on a regular basis, Saharan refugee camps at Tindouf.

Those various parties are certainly in a better position than anyone else to document the actual situation of the Saharan refugees.

6. Since the conflict broke out in Western Sahara, Algeria has followed a policy of working resolutely towards the restoration of peace, security and stability in the subregion. It considers that the efforts being made by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to establish the necessary

conditions for implementing the settlement plan can do without initiatives likely to exacerbate tension, not to mention a selective approach to the settlement plan. In that connection, while no one doubts that the Saharan refugees ardently desire to return to their homeland and freely determine their own destiny, the census and the return of those refugees should take place in accordance with the relevant provisions of the settlement plan, which calls for those operations to follow a precise schedule.

Algeria therefore takes the view that a settlement to the conflict in Western Sahara is to be found not in persistent adherence to a wrong approach to the conflict, or in a policy of procrastination, but in action to overcome the obstacles impeding implementation of the settlement plan and to remove all the military or administrative constraints still blocking the return of the Saharan refugees and delaying the organization by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity, of a free and fair referendum among the people of Western Sahara.

7. Algeria has willingly made considerable sacrifices in accepting these refugees in its territory for over 17 years. It has also willingly contributed to the implementation of the settlement plan by allocating assistance estimated at $10 million, in the conviction that the two parties are equally disposed to implement the settlement plan accepted by them.

8. Algeria will continue to give the United Nations necessary support for a just and permanent settlement of the conflict in Western Sahara, on the basis of the exercise by the people of Western Sahara of their right to determine their own destiny freely and without constraint.